

Message Text

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ACTION AID-59

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 EA-10 ISO-00 EB-08 COME-00 TRSE-00
OMB-01 FRB-03 SS-15 SP-02 L-03 IGA-02 CIAE-00
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FM AMEMBASSY RANGOON
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 4569
INFO AMEMBASSY TOKYO IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY LONDON PRIORITY
AMEMBASSY PARIS PRIORITY
AMEMBASSY BONN PRIORITY
AMEMBASSY CANBERRA PRIORITY
AMEMBASSY OTTAWA PRIORITY

C O N F I D E N T I A L RANGOON 3776

C O R R E C T E D C O P Y (PARA 4 PREVIOUSLY OMITTED)

TOKYO PASS TO AID DEPUTY ADMINISTRATOR ADLER

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: EAID, EFIN, BM, IBRD

SUBJ: BURMA CONSULTATIVE GROUP MEETING

1. MORNING OF DECEMBER 2 MINISTER OF FINANCE AND PLANNING TUN TIN
CALLED SUDDEN MEETING AT AMBASSADORIAL LEVEL OF REPRESENTATIVES OF
CONSULTATIVE GROUP COUNTRIES. IN ABSENCE OF AMBASSADOR UP COUNTRY,
DCM ATTENDED.

2. PURPOSE OF MEETING WAS TO INFORM THE REPRESENTATIVES THA GUB
HAS REQUESTED WORLD BANK TO RESCHEDULE CONSULTATIVE GROUP MEETING
IN PARIS FROM DECEMBER 14 TO SOMETIME DURING THE PERIOD OF
JANUARY 18 TO FEBRUARY 10. HE APOLOGIZED PROFUSELY AND EXPLAINED
THAT THE ELECTION LAWS REQUIRE THAT ALL PROSPECTIVE CANDIDATES
FOR THE PYITHU HLUTTAW MUST PRESENT THEMSELVES TO THEIR ELECTORATES
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PRIOR TO THE ELECTION. TUN TIN SAID THAT IN A RECENT VISIT
TO HIS ELECTORATE HE HAD EXPLAINED THE NECESSITY OF HIS
GOING TO THE MEETING IN PARIS AND HAD SECURED THE APPROVAL OF
HIS OWN CONSTITUENCY AND THE KACHIN STATE COUNCIL. HOWEVER,
YESTERDAY AFTERNOON AND AGAIN THIS MORNING THE "HIGHEST
AUTHORITY" HAD DETERMINED THAT EVEN A STATE COUNCIL COULD NOT
VIOLATE THE ELECTION LAW WITHOUT A PARLIAMENTARY SESSION.

CONSEQUENTLY TUN TIN AND HIS TWO DEPUTY MINISTERS, ALL OF WHOM WILL BE CANDIDATES, ARE REQUIRED TO REMAIN IN BURMA UNTIL THE ELECTION. TUN TIN SAID THAT HE HAD "MANEUVERED" AS MUCH AS HE COULD IN ORDER TO MAINTAIN THE SCHEDULED DATE BUT THAT IN VIEW OF THE DECISION OF THE "HIGHEST AUTHORITY" IT WAS IMPOSSIBLE FOR HIM TO ADHERE TO THE SCHEDULE. AGAIN APOLOGIZING HE APPEALED TO THE REPRESENTATIVES FOR UNDERSTANDING AND FOR THEIR HELP IN CONVINCING THEIR GOVERNMENTS OF THE NECESSITY FOR THIS POSTPONEMENT. THE PERIOD JANUARY 18 TO FEBRUARY 10 WAS SELECTED IN THAT IT FOLLOWS THE ELECTION AND PRECEDES THE MEETING OF THE PYITHU HLUTTAW. THE WORLD BANK HAS BEEN INFORMED OF THE BURMESE REQUEST AND HAS BEEN ASKED TO APPROACH RESPECTIVE GOVERNMENTS AND ATTEMPT TO RESCHEDULE THE MEETING.

3. SPEAKING FIRST AS DEAN OF THE CORPS, THE BRITISH AMBASSADOR ASKED IF THE MEETING COULD NOT BE POSTPONED EVEN LONGER IN ORDER TO PROVIDE TIME FOR THE COMPLETION OF THE THIRD FOUR-YEAR PLAN AND INSTALLATION OF A NEW CABINET. HE SAID THAT HE COULD UNDERSTAND THE GUB WOULD LIKE TO KNOW AS SOON AS POSSIBLE APPROXIMATELY HOW MUCH ASSISTANCE MIGHT BE FORTHCOMING BUT THAT THE POTENTIAL DONOR GOVERNMENTS NEED TO KNOW THE GUIDELINES AND STRATEGY OF THE NEW CABINET. TUN TIN REPLIED THAT SINCE THE PRESENT CABINET, WHOSE LIFE ENDS IN MARCH 1978, HAD INITIATED THE IDEA OF A CONSULTATIVE GROUP, IT WANTED TO SEE THE FOUNDATIONS FIRMLY LAID BEFORE THE CABINET'S LIFE ENDED. HE POINTED OUT THAT ALTHOUGH

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POLICIES, PRINCIPLES AND PLANS WILL REMAIN THE SAME, INDIVIDUAL PERSONS ARE DIFFERENT. THUS, IF THE NEW CABINET WERE TO HAVE AN ENTIRELY NEW MEMBERSHIP, THE SUBJECT WOULD BE STRANGE TO THEM, THUS POSSIBLY CAUSING UNDUE DELAY. HE UNDERSTOOD THAT IT MIGHT NOT BE POSSIBLE TO RESCHEDULE DURING THE DESIRED PERIOD BUT HOPED THAT IT WOULD BE, AND APPEALED FOR OUR UNDERSTANDING.

4. IN RESPONSE TO DCM'S QUESTION WHETHER OR NOT THE FOUR-YEAR PLAN MIGHT BE COMPLETED AND AVAILABLE FOR PERUSAL BEFORE JANUARY 18, TUN TIN SAID THAT THE FIVE-YEAR DEVELOPMENT PLAN WHICH HAS BEEN PRESENTED TO THE DONOR COUNTRIES WILL IN FACT SIMPLY BE REPEATED IN THE FOUR-YEAR PLAN. (COMMENT: THIS OF COURSE DID NOT REALLY ADDRESS THE ISSUE, SINCE THIS IS ONLY ONE ASPECT OF THE FOUR-YEAR PLAN). US REP ASSOCIATED HIMSELF WITH BRITISH AMBASSADOR'S REMARKS AND SAID THAT HE THOUGHT THE DELAY WOULD NOT BE REGRETTED BY USG ALTHOUGH IT MIGHT CAUSE SCHEDULING PROBLEMS.

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